

CH-809

c. 1900

Watson Road Property

Malcolm vic.

Private

The Watson Road Property is a deteriorated two-story 2-part structure facing northwest at the end of Watson Road near the Prince Georges County boundary. The dwelling has a single-pile, side-passage plan. The property is slated for residential development, at which time the structures will be demolished. Dating from the turn of the 20th century, Watson Road House is similar to other examples of domestic vernacular architecture in Charles County built at the turn of the 20th century.

7. Description

Inventory No. CH-809

Condition

<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> deteriorated
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ruins
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> altered

Prepare both a one paragraph summary and a comprehensive description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

The Watson Road Property is a two-story 2-part structure facing northwest at the end of Watson Road near the Prince Georges County boundary. The dwelling has a single-pile, side-passage plan. The property is slated for residential development, at which time the structures will be demolished. The roof is metal and is pierced by an interior-end chimney flue on the southwest end. The cornice is boxed. Brick piers support the frame. Windows and doors are no longer present.

The front elevation of the main block includes two bays. The northernmost bay consists of the main entrance door with transom and sidelights that leads into a hall. The southernmost bay holds a window. Two single windows are placed assymmetrically on the second floor. The southwest elevation has two windows on the first and second stories. The rear elevation mirrors the front with the addition of a small window next to the rear door that lights a pantry under the main stairs. The northeast elevation includes a collapsed two-story kitchen wing. A small square window on the main block lights an attic chamber. The interior includes relatively elaborate Victorian details including four panel doors, picture molding and bullseye window and door surrounds. The deteriorated condition limited the extent of fieldwork.

8. Significance

Inventory No. CH-809

Period	Areas of Significance	Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> health/medicine	<input type="checkbox"/> performing arts	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> invention	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-1999	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment/ recreation	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion	
<input type="checkbox"/> 2000-	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> ethnic heritage	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science	
	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/ settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> social history	
	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning		<input type="checkbox"/> maritime industry	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation	
	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation		<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:	

Specific dates	1900	Architect/Builder	unknown
Construction dates	1900		

Evaluation for:

☐ National Register ☐ Maryland Register ☒ not evaluated

Prepare a one-paragraph summary statement of significance addressing applicable criteria, followed by a narrative discussion of the history of the resource and its context. (For compliance reports, complete evaluation on a DOE Form - see manual.)

Dating from the turn of the 20th century, Watson Road House is similar to other examples of domestic architecture in Charles County built at the turn of the 20th century. Following the Civil War, Charles County suffered the same fate as most of the southern states. The basis of the economy, slave labor, was gone. While planters continued to rely heavily on tobacco cultivation, slave labor was replaced with various systems of tenancy or wage labor. Due to dwindling profits, credit collapsed and many planters fell deep into debt. In addition, Federal taxes levied by the "carpet-bag" government threatened landowners with the loss of their land. This lack of capital made it difficult for farmers to branch out into other agricultural and commercial pursuits.

Adding to the economic stagnation following the war, was the unpredictability of tobacco prices. Through the latter part of the 19th century, tobacco values remained depressed, insuring that the small tenant farmers and share-croppers struggled. Tobacco production fell precipitously following the Civil War. In 1870, Charles County's crop fell in volume to less than half of what it was ten years earlier, and in price from 8 cents per pound in 1869 to just five cents per pound in 1889. By 1909 prices had still not recovered, rising only to 7 cents.

The post-war period also marked the end of large farms. In 1870 there were 545 farms in Charles County. By 1900 that number had more than tripled at 1900 farms. Farm size continually decreased as large farms, containing over 500 acres, were divided. The most dramatic increase was seen in the number of farms under fifty acres, which more than doubled between 361 farms in 1880 and 728 farms in 1920.

The turmoil of the Reconstruction era continued in Charles County well into the 20th century. Because of these economic difficulties, population growth in the county stagnated between 1860 and 1920. The general economic decline, and later, stagnation that followed the Civil War is evident in the census figures between 1860 and 1890. By 1890, the number of county residents was nearly 1,400 less than in 1860. With little industry or profitable agriculture drawing new residents to the county during the post-Civil War era, many young Charles County residents moved away as they reached maturity. The economic stagnation is reflected in the architectural heritage of the late 19th and early 20th century. Domestic architecture remained restrained and conservative until after World War II.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Inventory No. CH-809

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of surveyed property 66.3

Acreage of historical setting 66.3

Quadrangle name Hughesville

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

Verbal boundary description and justification

The property is associated with Charles County Property tax Map 17, Parcel 13.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Cathy Hardy/ Historic Sites Surveyor

organization Charles County Planning

date 3/4/2003

street and number 200 Baltimore Street

telephone 301-396-5815

city or town La Plata

state MD zip code 20646

The Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

return to: Maryland Historical Trust
DHCD/DHCP
100 Community Place
Crownsville MD 21032
410-514-7600

MARYLAND INVENTORY OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Inventory No. CH-809

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Watson Road Property

name of property

Charles County, MD

county and state

Major Bibliographic References:

Brown, Jack D., et al. *Charles County, Maryland, A History*.
Charles County Bicentennial Committee, 1976.

Charles County Land Records, Charles County Courthouse, LaPlata, Maryland.

Hardy, Cathy Currey. "Phase III Final Report Charles County Historic Sites Survey."
Charles County Planning. July 2002.

KCI Technologies, Inc. *Draft--Historic Context For the U.S. 301 Southern Corridor
Transportation Study*. August 1996.

Klapthor, Margaret Brown. *The History of Charles County, Maryland*.
LaPlata, MD: Charles County Tercentenary, Inc., 1958.

Lewis, J. Frank & Company. *The Maryland Directory*. 1880. Baltimore



CH-809 Charles County, MD
Name: WATSON ROAD PROPERTY
Location: MALCOLM, VIC.
Quad: HUGHESVILLE



CH 809

WATSON ROAD PROPERTY

MALCOLM NC

2/2003

G. HARDY

MD SHPO

LOOKING SE

lot 4



CH 809

WATSON ROAD PROPERTY

MALCOLM, VIC

2/2003

C. HARDY

MD SHPO

LOOKING NW

2 OF 4



CH-809

WATSON ROAD PRCP

MALCOLM VIC

2/2003

C. HARRY
LOOKING NE

30FH



CH 809

WATSON ROAD PROPERTY

MALCOLM VIL.

2/2003

C. HARDY

INTERIOR, LOOKING E

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